

Religious Conflict among Hawaii Nikkei and How Japanese Entered the Public School Curriculum, 1896–1924

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Introduction

Today over 87,000 K–12 students study Japanese in more than 700 schools in the United States (Japan Foundation 2005). Japanese language education seems most successful in states with larger populations of Nikkei (Japanese Americans), including California, Oregon, Washington, and Hawaii. One can naturally assume that Japanese is popular there as a heritage language, and because Pacific Coast colleges and universities have long-established Japanese studies programs. Beyond this casual assumption, we have little research on how Japanese language education became part of K–12 education, especially in the period before World War II. This paper examines the context of the birth of Japanese language instruction at private language schools in Hawaii and how it later became an elective at the territory's public schools in 1924. This is the earliest record I have found of Japanese instruction in any American secondary schools. This paper shows that conflict over religion and assimilation seems to have been the motivation behind making Japanese part of the secondary curricula in Hawaii public schools.

Japanese language education in Hawaii first emerged as private language schools run by religious organizations at the end of the 19th century. Within ten years, religious rivalry between Christian and Buddhist missionaries turned these schools into focal points of contention within the Japanese community. After losing this “school competition,” Christians fanned criticism that Buddhist schools instilled Nisei (second-generation Japanese Americans) with Japanese ideas and raised them as subjects of Imperial Japan. The suspicion was partially derived from the fact that unlike their parents, the Nisei had dual citizenship: they were Japanese nationals as well as American citizens. By 1920 the Nikkei

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population rose to 110,000, representing 43% of the territory's population (Daniels 1988:127). Whites were even more scared about the 44.5% of Hawaii Nikkei who were Nisei (Tamura 1994:30), since they could vote. Elites feared a Nisei bloc vote would result in a takeover of the territory. This paranoia spurred the white elites to try to control the education of Nikkei children, the largest ethnic group of "embryo American voters" (Wakukawa 1938:268).

Another factor contributing to the Japanese language school "problem" was the Americanization movement, which spread across the contiguous United States and Hawaii during and immediately following World War I. Under the slogan "one language under one flag," advocates of the movement promoted assimilation of foreigners, as well as the suppression of foreign newspapers and language schools. German was the main target of the movement on the mainland, but Japanese faced hostility after the movement spread to Hawaii (Wakukawa 1938:268). Furthermore, in Hawaii, the Americanization movement was used as an excuse for sugar plantation owners to suppress Japanese language schools in an attempt to tighten their reins on Japanese laborers, especially after the Japanese organized strikes. In Hawaii, the anti-Japanese-language-school movement was used by whites in power as a political means to control Hawaii's largest ethnic laborer group. Since the Reciprocity Treaty of 1875 enabled Hawaii to send sugar tariff-free to the United States, Hawaii's economy was based on the sugar industry, which was exclusively controlled by the so-called Big Five. Each of these five corporations ran different aspects of the economic system, such as ground and sea transportation, utilities, firms, and financial institutions (Fuchs 1961:22). Not only did they monopolize the islands' economy, these white business elites had influence, if not control, over major positions in the territorial government, including the education authorities (Tamura 1994:3). Japanese immigrants perceived the Japanese language schools as their communal center, cultural property, symbol of their success, and source of ethnic pride in an alien land. It was precisely these elements of pride toward the language schools within the immigrant society that made them so vulnerable to attack. The importance of the schools to the Nikkei community was manifested by the fact that one of the reasons to organize the Chūō Nihonjinkai (the Central Japanese Association) in 1903 was to establish and maintain Japanese language schools (Wakukawa 1938:146). Also, in the 1919 Oahu strike, the Japanese laborers' demand for a higher wages was partially rationalized by the cost of maintaining their

ethnic language schools. For the ruling whites, the Japanese language school issue was primarily a political matter rather than an educational question.

Although Hawaii was the first arrival point for most Japanese immigrants to the United States, one should be somewhat careful not to generalize the birth of Japanese language instruction and its development in Hawaii to the situation in the rest of the United States. On the other hand, because of Hawaii's historical, political, and social situations at the time, the orientation of Japanese language education in the United States was shaped first in Hawaii and later adopted on the mainland, in ways different from the Japanese language instruction of *kokugo kyōiku* as practiced in public schools in Japan. In this regard, studying the history of Japanese language schools in Hawaii should contribute historical depth to Japanese language studies by elucidating our long and complex origins as providers of foreign and/or heritage language education.

Although this paper focuses on the development of Japanese language schools and instruction in Hawaii, it also explores what those early schools were like and what they taught. This examination, however, will be somewhat cursory for several reasons. Many pioneering language schools were established by Christian or Buddhist ministers primarily as a means to recruit followers. These were usually based on the model of *terakoya*, private temple schools where one learned reading and writing during the Tokugawa era (Okumura n.d.:217). Therefore, Japanese language schools did not have systematic curricula and left little documentation regarding what was exactly taught. Only a fraction of the textbook titles used at these schools survived, since textbooks are considered ephemera unworthy of preservation. Lastly, during World War II, all Japanese language schools were forcibly closed down, and Nikkei in Hawaii, and on the West Coast for that matter, lost or burned anything related to Japan. Takagi, who conducted interviews with Nisei regarding their Japanese language school experience, also pointed out that "language and moral education at the language schools were not unified" (Takagi 1987:112). This paper, however, relies on surviving historical records and the analysis of textbooks conducted by a 1920 federal education survey committee (as explained later) to gain an impression of what Nikkei children were taught at the ethnic schools in order to help understand why the language schools became such a center of controversy.

Literature Review

Several education and history researchers have explored various aspects of Japanese language school issues in the United States. Some studies provide an overview of Japanese language school development in Hawaii (Matsubayashi 1984) and its relation to the Americanization movement (Halsted 1989; Asato 2003). Washimi (1998) examined the early schools run by Buddhist priests. Okita (1997) studied immigrants' Japanese education in Hawaii in light of how the social environment changed the concept of Japanese education. Kaneko (1995) analyzed Japanese textbooks compiled in Hawaii. Takagi (1987, 1992) focused on Japanese moral education in Hawaii during the prewar period and conducted textbook analysis and oral interviews, while Shimada (1998) dealt with the post-war return of language schools. Tamura (1994) approached the ethnic language school issue as part of her wider study of Nisei education, and Kumei (2002) analyzed Japanese government policy on Nisei education in America. There are other studies on the Japanese language school situation in California (Morimoto 1997) and Washington (Asato 2003, 2006). Asato (2005) conducted a textbook analysis comparing the 1920 textbooks compiled by Japanese language teachers in the state of Washington and the Japanese Ministry of Education textbooks. Many of the aforementioned works studied the schools from the perspective of the assimilation process and Nikkei identity. This paper builds on these studies but focuses on the question of how Japanese was adopted by Hawaii's public education system.

The Birth of Japanese Language Schools

Japanese labor recruitment to Hawaii was the result of the developing sugar industry during the Meiji era, especially between the 1890s and the first two decades of the 20th century (Takaki 1983:28). The Nikkei population in the Kingdom (1796–1893), Republic (1894–1898), and then U.S. Territory (1900–1959) steadily increased. In 1894, there were about 2,000 school-age Nikkei children in Hawaii, including 1,305 who had been born there (Ozawa 1972:13). Japanese parents became concerned about their children's mixture of spoken English, Hawaiian, and Japanese—Hawaii Creole English, popularly called Pidgin English (Tamura 1994:96). Christian missionary Reverend Takie Okumura, who started Honolulu's first Japanese language school, was moved by a little girl's

peculiar Japanese: “Me mama hanahana yōkonai” in response to his question “Are you with your mother?” He learned that “me mama” was pidgin for “my mother”, “hanahana” was the Hawaiian word for “work,” and “yōkonai” was a Japanese expression equivalent to “cannot come.” Okumura credits this exchange for his strong urge to establish a school (Okumura 1940:35–36). After several failed attempts to receive support from either the Japanese consul general in Honolulu or politicians in Japan, Reverend Okumura decided to establish a school independently. On April 6, 1896, he opened the Nihonjin Shōgakkō (Japanese Elementary School) in a room of the Queen Emma Hall, originally used as Queen Emma’s residence, with 30 students. Okumura purchased desks and chairs from \$15 in donations and was able to use the room for free (Okumura n.d.:166–169).

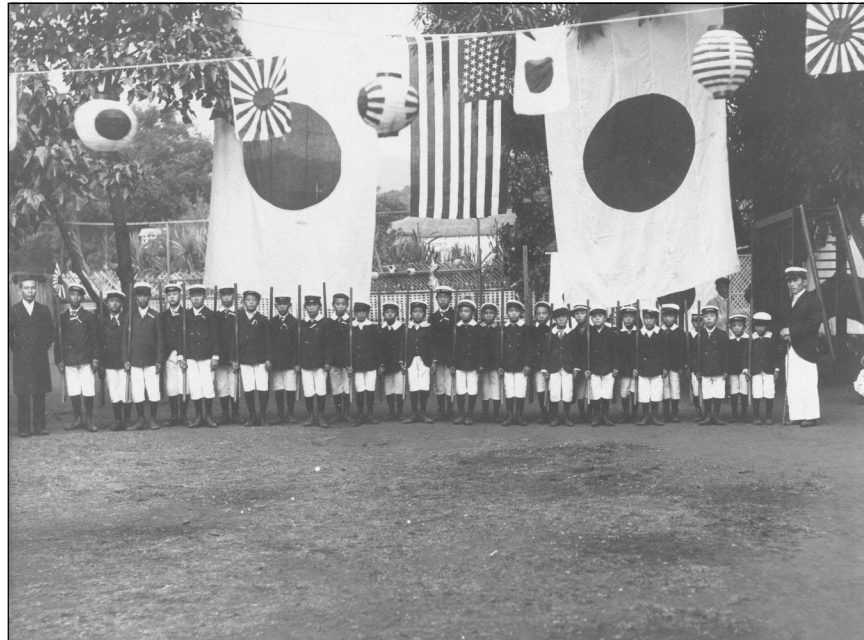


Figure 1. Rev. Okumura’s Japanese Language School, 1901
(courtesy of the Bishop Museum Archives)
Rev. Okumura is standing on the far left.

Okumura’s and other Japanese language schools were established as afternoon schools which children attended after public school. The

schools were open for only one to two hours every day. They taught children six years old and older reading, calligraphy, and composition, along with *shūshin* (moral education) and physical education. They used textbooks created by the *Monbushō* (Japanese Ministry of Education), and adopted the curriculum from public schools in Japan. Although the hours were too short to cover all materials included in the Japanese national curricula, it was imperative for schools to stress that they followed national education, because immigrant parents in this early period planned to return home after fulfilling their three-year contracts. The complete two-year curriculum sequence at Okumura's school also reflected this sojourner thinking. His school did not charge tuition and was run on donations (Hawaii Education Association 1937:6). Okumura requested Monbushō support for the school. Recognizing his work as an "undertaking worthy of highest praise," the Monbushō sent a copy of the *Kyōiku chokugo tōhon* (Japanese Imperial Rescript on Education), national textbooks, and some physical education equipment (Okumura 1940:40).

The language schools celebrated Japanese national holidays, such as the emperor's birthday. During the ceremony, students would bow down to the emperor's picture and recite the *Kyōiku chokugo*, as elementary school students then did in Japan (Ozawa 1972:61). Many Japanese parents did not send their children to public school on these national holidays, so many teachers at public schools reluctantly cancelled school those days. This was especially the case at public schools located near plantations where the majority of the students were Nikkei. In this initial stage, most Japanese language schools were run by the small Christian minority and were probably little more than afternoon daycare. Therefore, despite these schools' impressive public statements, such as "We will give a national education in accordance with the prescribed rules of the Imperial Department of Education," white authorities did not pay much attention to them (Wakukawa 1938:266).

Before Reverend Okumura's language school commenced, two schools had already been established on the neighbor islands of Hawaii and Maui. In 1893, Congregationalist missionary Reverend Shigefusa Kanda opened Hawaii's first Japanese language school in Kohala on the island of Hawaii. Two years later, Methodist Reverend Tamaki Gomi started a school in Kula, Maui (Publication Committee of "A History of Japanese Immigrants in Hawaii" 1964:16). Besides the missionary impulse, these were established partly because compulsory education for all children in Hawaii ages six to fifteen was not fully provided or mandated until 1896

(Fuchs 1961:270). In 1896, only 400 Nikkei children attended public schools in Hawaii out of a total of 14,000 pupils. Since 1,300 Nisei were born in Hawaii between 1868 and 1894, we can see that many Nikkei children did not receive any formal education unless they attended a local Japanese language school (Ozawa 1972:14).

In this sojourner period, Japanese parents did not place much value on English public education, so some did not send their children to a public school, since they intended to return home as soon as their contracts were over. In addition, oftentimes plantation villages were located in remote areas, so sending children to public school without transportation was simply infeasible. Even if commuting were possible, both the parents and children had difficulties communicating with public school teachers because of the language barrier. Another reason the immigrant parents preferred Japanese language schools over public schools was that these schools often had an affiliated kindergarten and daycare for elementary school pupils after public school hours. This is another reason that Japanese language schools were indispensable for working immigrant parents. However, the very *raison d'être* of the Japanese language schools' existence was their emphasis on moral education (*Hawai Hōchi*, 20 February 1919). Japanese parents' belief in the importance of moral education crystallized their support for the language schools, especially after many Nikkei decided to settle in Hawaii.

Competition between Christian and Buddhist Schools

As was mentioned, these first Japanese language schools in Hawaii were initially run by Japanese Christian missionaries. They were invited by the Hawaiian Evangelical Association and landed in the islands well before the arrival of the Buddhist priests who followed Japanese immigrants. The missionaries struggled to proselytize Japanese immigrants who were mostly Buddhists, many of whom saw Christianity as a prohibited and alien religion. Missionaries hoped teaching children would not only help dissolve Japanese suspicion but might even attract Japanese immigrants to their churches.

Several years later, Buddhists opened their own schools. In 1898, Reverends Sanju Kaneyasu and Gyōshin Satō of Honpa Hongwanji established schools in Hilo and Kona, respectively. Reverend Kaneyasu first taught children writing and proper etiquette at the Hilo temple, until a school building was constructed two years later. This school, named Hilo

Nihonjin Shōgakkō, was subsidized by the Hawaii Honpa Hongwanji (Jōdoshinshū Mission) and administered by its local minister/principal (Imamura 1918b:259).

In 1902, Hawaii Honpa Hongwanji headquarters opened its Hongwanji Fuzoku Shōgakkō (Elementary School Attached to Hongwanji) in Honolulu. This was under the leadership of Bishop Yemyō Imamura, who headed the mission. Bishop Imamura perceived Japanese language schools as a critical instrument to overcome the difficulties of disseminating Buddhist teaching in Hawaii, where not only was Christianity the dominant religion, but where most whites saw Buddhism as a “barbarous worship of idols” (Imamura 1918a:29). Imamura explained that the reason for building his school was that parents toiled all day long and could not give children proper care at home, while public schools provided education, but ignored moral training and did not provide either daycare or kindergarten. According to Imamura, this situation worried parents, who feared their children would not be appropriate successors when families returned to Japan, or would not be good American citizens, should they remain in Hawaii. Therefore, Imamura rationalized building temples in order to remove parents’ anxieties by providing Japanese education to their children (Imamura 1918a: 44–45). Some whites perceived Imamura as having “absolute authority over the priests and teachers of the sect as well as its members, controlling the whole body . . . as easily as one moves his fingers” (United States Department of the Interior 1920:111).

The Hongwanji Fuzoku Shōgakkō opened with 162 students, who were divided into four classes at the elementary level and two at the advanced level. The curriculum was modeled on the Japanese national school system, except that there were no classes on weekends. Boys also had military training with wooden rifles, while girls learned sewing. Three years later, the school built a new elementary school building with support from the Hongwanji headquarters in Kyoto and Prince Fushimi (Honpa Hongwanji 1931:14).

The establishment of the Hongwanji Fuzoku Shōgakkō made Reverend Okumura furious at Bishop Imamura. Okumura claimed that Imamura breached a supposed pact not to build Buddhist schools. According to Okumura, several years earlier, he frankly discussed his fear with Imamura that “Buddhists might start their own school and disturb the peace of the Japanese community.” This was the reason Okumura accepted some Japanese community leaders’ proposal to yield control over his school to the Japanese community in order to free it from religious

influence. According to Okumura, this was in 1899 when he expanded the school with a new building and agreed to relinquish control to a committee of 33 Japanese members chaired by Consul General Miki Saitō. Okumura explained that Imamura damaged his “secular” school since it lost many students to the Hongwanji School; the enrollment at his school plunged from 200 to 70. Okumura argued that Hongwanji promoted its schools as offering purely Japanese education or *chūkun aikoku* spirit (loyalty to the emperor and love of the county) and aggressively built schools on each island and plantation, regardless of whether it was already served by a Japanese school (Okumura n.d.:222). Imamura retorted that the Hongwanji Fuzoku Shōgakkō was built to protect members’ children from situations such as when a teacher at Okumura’s school criticized Buddhism to a class with many Hongwanji children. According to Imamura, the Buddhist parents protested that they wished to educate their children under the influence of Buddha’s teaching (Imamura 1918b:47).

Imamura’s schools especially thrived after Japanese workers’ strikes at the Waipahu Plantation in 1904 and again in 1909. These strikes became an opportunity for Bishop Imamura to foster improved relations with plantation owners. During the **first** Waipahu strike, Consul General Saitō attempted to intervene without success, but Imamura succeeded in convincing laborers to return to work (Imamura 1918a:38). These incidents impressed plantation interests, who saw Imamura’s influence and may have thought that “Buddhism tended to enhance the docility of their labor force” (Hunter 1971:71). In this early period, plantation owners considered temples, churches, and Japanese language schools incentives for laborers to settle, and provided land and materials to erect school buildings, and sometimes even a salary for teachers. This led to fierce competition for subventions, not only between Christian and Buddhist ministries, but also among various sects of Buddhists, and non-sectarian schools.

Other religious organizations also saw the benefit of running Japanese schools. The Jōdo sect established 11 schools with 11 teachers, Congregationalists ran six schools taught by 10 teachers, and the Methodists had two schools and two teachers. Of the 87 language school teachers in 1909, 39 taught at Buddhist schools. As competition between religious sects became more intense, it involved the entire Japanese community in a Japanese language school “problem,” prompting some parents to establish secular schools. This led to 33 religiously independent schools, many

of which were run by local Japanese communities (see Table 1). The establishment of independent schools also reflected some Japanese parents' hope to divorce religious indoctrination from their children's education. Another reason some Nikkei wanted to have independent schools was that religious competition created multiple schools in one area, causing an enormous financial burden on the immigrant community. Whenever a school was established, was moved, or needed to construct a new building, community members were asked to contribute. Donations for such "public activities" were considered a communal obligation; if one refused to pay this "tax," one was regarded as not fulfilling a civic responsibility (*Nippū Jiji*, 14 July 1911).

Table 1. Japanese Language School Affiliation in 1909 (Okita 1997:114)

RELIGION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS
Hongwanji	23	28
Jōdo	11	11
Congregational	6	10
Methodist	2	2
Independent	33	36
TOTAL	75	87

To halt further expansion of Buddhist schools, the Hawaiian Evangelical Association, of which Reverend Okumura was a prominent leader, appealed to territorial authorities in June 1911. The superintendents of its Japanese section, Reverends Orramel Gulick, John Gulick, and Perley L. Horne, petitioned Hawaii's Department of Public Instruction (DPI) regarding the use of a Waialua public school building. The petition accused Buddhists of using their language schools to expand control over Japanese in Hawaii. The petitioners argued that these Buddhist schools opposed the Americanism that Hawaii's public schools had been nurturing. They proposed Japanese language instruction be offered using the public school building after school hours. This, they argued, would help sever the connection between Buddhists and language schools and prevent anti-Americanism from spreading among Japanese (*Nippū Jiji*, 5 June 1911). At this point, they were not proposing to offer Japanese instruction as an official part of school curricula, but simply asking for permission to use the public school building. The reasons they gave for this were that (1) it was proper to educate the children of Japanese ancestry in "the public school buildings and according to the ideals and customs of

public school education,” (2) it “waste[d] the money of the community to build separate Japanese schools,” and (3) it helped to “maintain the public school atmosphere . . . and to avoid the danger and waste of time and energy” of going to a Japanese school (JLS). Missionaries presumably also hoped this would save them the expense of constructing additional school buildings and serve as a form of approval from Christian elites in the DPI.

Reporting this incident to the Japanese Foreign Minister, Honolulu Consul General Sen’ichi Ueno explained that this petition was exaggerated and that the DPI simply rejected the request. Ueno explained that the petitioners’ official rationale was to make all Japanese schools secular and to silence “anti-American” factions. In reality, he was convinced, this was rooted in the feud between Christian and Buddhist missionaries. Ueno explained that the petition was supposedly submitted by American missionaries, but that it was actually part of the Japanese Christians’ plan to eradicate their opponents’ schools (DRO 3.10.2.1).

Saburō Kurusu, who was Honolulu Deputy Consul General in 1912, recalled that regardless of time or place, there “always were problems about Japanese language schools.” For example, “one plantation had two or three denominations’ schools which never conceded to each other.” According to Kurusu, planters thought it was easier to give money to the Japanese consulate, rather than directly to individual schools, and for the consulate to resolve school problems (Publication Committee of “A History of Japanese Immigrants in Hawaii” 1964:234). Kurusu was describing the annual subsidy from the Hawaiian Sugar Planters’ Association to Japanese language schools. Through the association, planters secretly contributed \$1,000 annually to the consulate between 1907 and 1920 to underwrite language schools (DRO 3.10.2.10). As another example to illustrate how frustrating the language schools had become to the planters, after a public school was built in the Papaaloa plantation on the island of Hawaii in 1912, the plantation owner asked the DPI to close down the public school to avoid these language-school-related troubles, once the planter learned of Hongwanji’s plan to build a language school next to the public one. The DPI agreed, leaving children no choice but to commute to the closest public school in Laupahoehoe, four miles away (DRO 3.10.2.10). In 1914 alone, there were more than 50 locations in Hawaii involved in such school disputes (Publication Committee of “A History of Japanese Immigrants in Hawaii” 1964:234).



Figure 2. Young Nisei in Hawaii eat lunch at a kindergarten attached to a Japanese language school.
(courtesy of the Hawaii State Archives)

Criticism inside the Nikkei Community and Japanese Government Policy on Immigrant Children's Education

Reflecting the ethnic community's concern with religious competition over the language schools, a Japanese vernacular daily, the *Hawai Shokumin Shinbun*, questioned the schools administered by religious ministries. Publisher Kazutami Eguchi, a former Christian missionary himself, called on Bishop Imamura to divorce religion from language school education (*Hawai Shokumin Shinbun*, 16 September 1910). He condemned clergy for running schools as side businesses and praised Consul General Saitō's efforts to cut off religious ties from Okumura's Honolulu Nihonjin Shōgakkō, which Eguchi called a model school (*Hawai Shokumin Shinbun*, 20 August 1909). Eguchi argued that Japanese school problems existed throughout the eight islands and asserted that they derived from the problem of mixing religion and education.

In October 1911, Consul General Ueno, Saitō's successor, revealed his view on Japanese children's education in the *Shokumin Shinbun*. Ueno argued that education for Hawaii-born Nikkei should focus on raising children loyal to America (*Hawai Shokumin Shinbun*, 18 October 1911).

Two months later, Ueno claimed in a public debate that Japanese “children born in the United States are American citizens, so it is natural for the American public to fear providing these children with an education not focusing on the United States.” Therefore, he continued, “I hope that these children who are American citizens should have an education consistent with Americanism.” He stressed that “it is the duty of farsighted immigrants to raise children who are loyal to America and yet are familiar with Japan’s situation” (Okita 1997:133).

Ueno’s public pronouncements regarding Nikkei children’s education, however, contradicted the Monbushō’s policy on overseas children. In 1906, Vice Education Minister Seitarō Sawayanagi sent official instructions on the education of Japanese Imperial subjects residing overseas to Vice Foreign Minister Sutemi Chinda. This was originally a response to Vancouver Consul General Toshirō Morikawa’s inquiry to Tokyo on how to respond to the establishment of the Vancouver Kyōritsu Nihon Kokumin Gakkō (Community Japanese National School). Sawayanagi established two guiding principles: (1) Try not to lose the spirit of Japanese subjects and develop their Japanese characteristics; (2) Regarding curricula, although there is no absolute, follow the standards of the *Shōgakkō Rei* (Primary School Order). For geography, and foreign languages, the curriculum could be slightly modified to adapt to local situations. In the subjects of moral education and geography, the relationship between Japan and the host country should be explained, and Japanese dignity and racial solidarity should be emphasized. At ceremonies, national holidays, and other gatherings, he called for fostering Japanese concepts (DRO 3.10.2.10-5). This seems to be the first official Monbushō policy on Japanese emigrants’ education. It was published in the *Ryōjikan Shitsumu Sankōsho* (Consular Guidebook) in 1916 for consulates to follow (Japanese Foreign Ministry 1916:557). Kumei’s (2000) interpretation is that it established the core educational philosophy on emigrants’ offspring who were to be raised as Japanese nationals. In the 1906 letter, Sawayanagi also showed enthusiasm for subsidizing overseas schools (DRO 3.10.2.10-5).

Two years later, Sawayanagi asked the Foreign Ministry to conduct a survey of Japanese schools overseas as a first step to planning such subventions (DRO 3.10.2.31). This time, he acted in response to a request for subsidies from the Hōten Shōgakkō in China (DRO 3.10.2.31). Sawayanagi wrote Chinda that he wanted to support “not only the one in Hōten, but other schools located in places with potential for business” (DRO

3.10.2.31). The survey was conducted in China, the Philippines, and the United States, including Hawaii. However, schools located in the United States and Canada were not included on the list of schools recommended for funding because consul generals in America suggested the funds were unnecessary. Hawaii's Consul General Ueno concurred and explained that sugar planters subsidized Japanese schools. Ueno also argued against official support for these schools because Hawaii was an American territory, even though the schools were built by immigrants (DRO 3.10.2.31).

These consular reports probably indicate concern about the rising anti-Japanese movement in America. At this point, the Foreign and Education ministries placed Japanese language schools in North America and Hawaii beyond their active control. However, Sawayanagi's 1906 policy, which was forwarded to consul generals, remained Tokyo's official policy. In reality, consul generals in Honolulu and on the West Coast often deliberately ignored Sawayanagi's 1906 order whenever they encountered resistance.

Changes to Japanese Language School Policy

In 1915, the number of Japanese American students at Hawaii public schools rose to 13,600, making up over one-third of the entire public school enrollment of 36,500. It should be noted that more than 90% of school-age Nisei concurrently attended Japanese language schools every day after public school. As the Nisei population increased, the number of Japanese language schools reached 135 (Okahata 1971:225), almost matching the number of public schools on all of the islands (Ozawa 1972:70).

This Japanese language school "problem" visibly grew. Many white public school teachers claimed they felt threatened to see the majority of their students "move" to a nearby Japanese language school right after public school hours, where they imagined alien teachers subverted their democratic lessons. Their perception was that the Japanese government created its own educational system on the same scale as Hawaii's public school system. They criticized these ethnic schools for instilling Japanese ideas, hampering Nikkei assimilation, adding extra physical and intellectual burdens on the pupils, and preventing them from mastering English (Ozawa 1972:70).

Responding to this public criticism, in 1915 Japanese teachers established the Hawaii Japanese Education Association in order to chart a

new direction for their schools. They emphasized that Japanese schools should no longer provide Japanese national education, but concentrate on language education. First they discussed changing schools' names from *Nihonjin shōgakkō* (Japanese elementary school) to *Nihongo gakkō* (Japanese language school). They explained the former name led to the misunderstanding that the schools raised children as Japanese subjects. The new policy required eight years instead of six years to complete the lower and secondary divisions of language school, since the limited number of instructional hours in Hawaii's language schools made it difficult to complete the curricula in six years. In addition to these eight years, some schools offered four years at the advanced level, equivalent to high school. Recognizing that the burden of work assigned by a Japanese language school was in addition to public school lessons, the teachers decided to teach only language for the first eight grades. Other subjects would not be neglected but were incorporated into language study (Ozawa 1972:64). The teachers also decided to compile new textbooks to replace the Monbushō series, since the textbooks "authorized by the Imperial Department of Education . . . helped to deepen and intensify [the public's] suspicions and misunderstanding regarding the motives of these language schools" (Wakukawa 1938:268). The teachers suggested the materials for the new language textbooks should be taken from moral education, old stories, legends, anecdotes, history, geography, science, art, and also rules of conduct in life. They were especially concerned about history materials. It was originally suggested that history materials in language textbooks should include key Japanese figures and incidents representing each era to highlight their significance. They later modified this to include biographies of famous Americans and events, especially highlighting content showing the relationship between the two counties in order to incorporate aspects of Americanism. Tokyo Imperial University Professor Yaichi Haga was invited through the Monbushō to create the first Japanese textbook series in the United States (United States Department of the Interior 1920:116). The total cost of publication was around ¥5,000. The new textbooks began to be used in 1917 (Odo and Shinoto 1985:129). These textbooks also served as models for initiatives in California and Washington.

The 1919 federal survey of education in Hawaii, as examined later, offers us an idea of what the textbook series was like. It consisted of eight volumes: six volumes for the primary grades and two for the advanced level. The Hawaii textbook series, especially the first six of the eight

books, was actually a modified version of Monbushō textbooks rather than a new creation. The Hawaii version omitted some chapters and subjects and substituted for them “content dealing with American and Hawaiian subjects and reprinting the remaining chapters as they occur in the Government texts” (United States Department of the Interior 1920:117). For instance, volume 1 was compiled on the basis of the Monbushō first- and second-grade textbooks. It contained “words, short phrases, and illustrations.” On the first page, the word *hata* (flag) was accompanied by color illustrations of the American and Japanese flags. It is obvious that the original Monbushō textbook contained only the Japanese one, but this was a typical modification in an attempt to reflect American subjects. On other pages, children (supposedly Japanese Americans) were “depicted garbed in American dress” (United States Department of the Interior 1920:118). The survey report’s overall reaction to volume 1 was:

There are no distinctly American subjects treated in this book, and only one Hawaiian subject, that being in the eighteenth lesson, which is descriptive of the papaya and guava fruits growing plentifully in the islands. (United States Department of the Interior 1920:118)

The report also highlighted several chapters that displayed Japanese nationalistic characteristics and cited their English translations. Chapter 34 in volume 2, “The *Tenchōsetsu*” (the Emperor’s Birthday) contained the lines: “On this day every Japanese in Japan or in any foreign country celebrates the birthday . . . Is it not glorious to see the flag of the sun shining in the light of the dawn?” American elements were also seen in this chapter: “The people of every nation have a day which they cannot forget . . . In America, Independence Day, Washington’s Birthday, and Christmas are the most important holidays.” The second chapter of volume 3, “The Golden Kite,” cited as one of many chapters dealing with Japanese mythology, described the first Japanese emperor’s expedition against villains who ran away after seeing light from a magical kite illuminating Emperor Jinmu’s bow and arrow. Another story is an example of the biographies of Japanese heroes in the textbook series. “The Forty-Seven Rōnin” in volume 4 was based on a historical incident. The 47 samurai fought and committed ritual suicide to protect their lord’s honor, which is “greatly admired by Japanese because it exemplifies loyalty at its best” (United States Department of the Interior 1920:119). The U.S. Bureau of Education critics argued that the height of Japanese nationalism was seen in volume 6 regarding the Japanese Imperial Rescript

on Education, which “is read with ceremony twice every week and on national holidays in the schools of Japan” (United States Department of the Interior 1920:121). The teachers specifically created a chapter called “A Good Citizen,” at the very end of volume 6, with the hope for Hawaii’s Nikkei to be excellent Japanese Americans. It read:

As future American citizens, you should resolve to exert yourselves in the country’s cause and for its development . . .

You should resolve to stand for justice, fair, and impartial; you should be good citizens of the country.

Since the beginning of the nation’s history, the forefathers of the land of Japan have shown distinct character . . . When you stand with other races in competition, you must not lose self-confidence, the essential traits of the Japanese race, and the conviction that you are the excelled descendants of the nation of Japan. Do not forget the strong points of the Japanese nation; preserve the good traits; and so conduct yourselves that you be esteemed by all races in America. Future American citizens, do not bring a stain upon the name of the fatherland and do not disgrace your ancestor’s name (United States Department of the Interior 1920:121–122).

The Hawaii textbook series illustrates Japanese parents’ and teachers’ aspirations and hopes for Nisei to be respectable American citizens with proud Japanese characteristics. Therefore, most saw no conflict in sending their children to Japanese language schools to learn Japanese culture as well as giving them an American education. However, their interpretation of assimilating themselves to American society was incompatible with the dominant society’s belief that the only acceptable assimilation pattern was absolute conformity to Anglo-Saxon norms.

Despite the association’s ambition and the significant expenditure, the textbook series failed to satisfy the wider American public, as the federal education survey report demonstrates. It also disappointed Japanese teachers. At the 1918 Japanese Education Association annual meeting—only one year after the textbooks were adopted—the teachers agreed that Haga’s textbook series did not meet Hawaii pupils’ educational needs and made instruction extremely difficult (Ozawa 1972:81). Some Japanese parents even expressed their anger, since the textbooks removed sections they felt characterized Japan, such as “loyalty and patriotism” (Okumura 1940:43) and the subjects related to the Japanese Emperor (Yanagida 1996:59). Some argued the texts “looked simply like a mixture of moral education, geography, history, and language” (Odo and Shinoto 1985:129). At that very meeting, they eagerly formed a committee to again revise the textbooks (Ozawa 1972:81–82).

Mounting Pressure for School Control Legislation

Japanese language school teachers held their third Education Association meeting in July 1918. The atmosphere was tense, as America was at war, and Japanese workers on several plantations began to strike for higher wages to catch up with the rising cost of living. This situation became even more tense the next year as Japanese plantation workers throughout the islands united in a higher wage movement (Okihiko 1991:67). This time, Bishop Imamura and priests from other Buddhist sects urged the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association to yield to the workers' demands (Moriya 1999:97). This crisis eventually worsened into total confrontation, as negotiations collapsed, and led to the 1920 Oahu sugar plantation strike. Japanese language schools became integral players in the struggle as strikers' meeting sites and as shelters for workers evicted from their plantation homes (Halsted 1989:69). Some schools were even used as emergency hospitals for strikers who contracted the Spanish flu (Duus 1999:87–88). Several Buddhist language school teachers and leaders of the Hongwanji Young Men's Buddhist Association also played prominent roles in the six-month strike (Okihiko 1991:130–131).

Amid this turmoil, former territorial Senator Albert F. Judd launched a campaign to pass a Japanese language school control law in the January 4, 1919, *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*. Judd editorialized for a bill that would require public and private school teachers to obtain a license from the DPI. He suggested that licensure be contingent upon passing a test to determine if the teachers possessed the "ideals of democracy and have a knowledge of the English language, American history, and methods of government" (*Honolulu Advertiser*, 4 January 1919).

The ethnic community was upset, because if enacted, it would mean the end for most schools, as few Japanese teachers spoke fluent English. The Japanese Education Association and community leaders countered Judd's campaign through public meetings and editorials in vernacular newspapers. Teachers also appealed to the DPI, the territorial legislature, and the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association, and lobbied various American organizations not to support the school bill (Ozawa 1972:93–95). During the March legislature session, three different school control bills were introduced. The Japanese Education Association conducted a counter-campaign, sending a letter to the House to request withdrawal of the bill. This appeared in the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* (10 March 1919). All three bills failed to pass in the face of strong resistance by the Nikkei

community. Under the headline “Japanese to Dominate Economic Life of Hawaii in Another Generation,” the April 5, 1919, *Star Bulletin* warned that Japanese, brought as “cheap producers” to the islands, were “today in control of the labor situation.” They insisted, continued the article, on “their native language schools . . . and native language daily papers,” and “the native born Japanese has the vote of course, and there are thousands of these little brown brothers coming on all the time . . . It is only a question of time.”

Although the legislators did not pass a foreign language school control bill, they passed an act authorizing Governor Charles McCarthy and Superintendent of Public Instruction Vaughan MacCaughey to request the United States Bureau of Education to conduct a survey of education in Hawaii (*Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 30 April 1919). On October 10, 1919, the Federal Educational Survey team, appointed by the Commissioner of Education, arrived in Hawaii. The federal survey was supposed to be an investigation of local conditions by national education leaders who would share their expertise with local authorities in order to guide educational reform (Halsted 1989:81–82). The survey’s mission was supposedly to examine Hawaii’s entire education system, but the Japanese language school situation clearly became its most sensational issue. The DPI’s newly appointed Superintendent MacCaughey played a critical role in focusing the survey on the Japanese language issue. In the months before the survey team arrived in Hawaii, MacCaughey sent Education Commissioner, Philander P. Claxton a flood of anti-Japanese propaganda and editorials against language schools (HSF). In the survey report, published in June 1920, the team argued that the language schools were “centers of an influence which, if not distinctly anti-American, is certainly un-American.” The report also complained that the 1917 textbook series contained no distinctively American subjects and still included myths of Japanese divinity, stories of loyal samurai and famous Buddhist priests, and Japanese folktales. It concluded that all foreign-language schools should be abolished (United States Department of the Interior 1920:116,134). The effect of the report was immediate. Several organizations proposed school control bills (Hunter 1971:127). The Nikkei community realized that it had to compromise in order to save the language schools. In response, a group of Japanese leaders drafted a compromise school control bill. This easily passed at a special session of the Hawaii legislature and was immediately signed into law by Governor McCarthy on November 24, 1920 (Halsted 1989:97). The foreign lan-

guage school control law, known as Act 30, was written following the guidelines recommended by the federal survey team with only a few modifications. The law, enacted on July 1, 1921, regulated foreign language schools' operating hours and required permits for both schools and teachers. The law also gave the DPI complete authority over the textbooks and curricula at Japanese language schools (Matsubayashi 1984: 141–143). It also allowed DPI to regulate teachers. In order to prepare for the teaching license examination, Japanese teachers attended Americanization classes held at the Territorial Library. The ethnic community spent more than \$6,000 on this three-month workshop (*Japan Review* 1921:209). Act 30 targeted Japanese language schools, but also affected several Chinese and Korean language schools in the territory. However, according to the *Star Bulletin*, a House representative sent a letter to Chinese schools when the bill was introduced to the House, explaining that it “will have no interference whatever with Chinese schools here, as a majority of the students speak English in the classrooms.” The letter also said that “There can be no conflict between the Chinese teachers and American teachers, as they are citizens of republics, with similar aims.” The newspaper reported that Chinese educators had no intention to fight against the bill and were ready to abide by it (*Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 17 March 1910).

Institutionalizing Japanese Language Education

Under MacCaughy's supervision, a joint committee for the compilation of a textbook series was formed, consisting of 15 Japanese and six American members. It began work in early 1922. However, from the start, the American committee went far beyond its mission of proposing concrete revisions to the textbooks and recommended more dramatic changes (JMFA/LC). They proposed curtailing language school instruction from eight years to six by abolishing the first and second grades. In addition, the Americans suggested eliminating the kindergartens. Further, they recommended that the DPI take over teaching Asian languages, which would be taught by regular public school employees. The American members also suggested that new textbooks contain English equivalents for all Japanese words so as to be geared to students who speak English as their native language (JMFA/LC). These proposals were radical and far-reaching. The most dramatic clause, cutting the first three years, not only would probably have bankrupted most language schools, but more

importantly would have made it extremely difficult for Nisei to truly master Japanese. It would also have removed preschoolers from their caretakers, thus preventing mothers from working. The Japanese language daily *Nippū Jiji* estimated that the curtailment regulation, if enacted, would reduce the enrollment by 40 or 50 percent, virtually abolishing the schools (*Nippū Jiji*, 29 November 1922). The paper's editor, Yasutarō Sōga (a Christian) wrote that at a meeting of the Japanese Education Association, the teacher representatives made a resolution calling for the separation of language schools from Buddhist organizations. Sōga argued "if every Japanese language institution had severed its relation from the Buddhist religion, today's troublesome problem might not have come up" (*Nippū Jiji* [English pages], 30 November, 1922).

The Textbook Revision Joint Committee split in the very early stages of its work. After several exchanges of opinion concerning the future direction of the language schools, the American members supposedly imposed the aforementioned proposals on the Japanese members. However, a declassified American Military Intelligence Division report reveals that "a prominent Japanese Christian minister (in the Japanese committee) . . . was the proposer to the committee of the recommendation in question." Among the 15 Japanese committee members, Reverend Okumura was one of the two Christian ministers, and he certainly fits the profile suggested by the report—"a consistent worker among the Japanese for Americanization and Christianization." According to the report, "from the beginning of the meetings . . . this minister held out steadfastly for complete abolition of the schools or the adaptation of the recommendations which might, in the future, mean the abolition of the schools." The report described the Christian minister as persistently opposing the Japanese language schools and the Buddhist institutions and insisting that the elimination of these two factors from the Territory would expedite Americanization and assimilation of Hawaii's Nikkei (DRO 3.8.2.339-2). In the fourth meeting of both committees, the Japanese committee members reluctantly accepted the American members' new policies in "deference to the spirit of cooperation and harmony" (JMFA/LC). However, the American committee members' proposal that Japanese language instruction be offered at public schools was temporarily tabled due to the Japanese members' objections.

We can see that the Christians continued to frantically promote two policies to counter the success of Buddhist schools; one was to make language schools secular, and the other was to offer Japanese instruction as

part of public education. The Christians, who sustained their small schools primarily by ministers' personal efforts, probably thought that these policies seemed to be their only path to combat the dominance of the Hongwanji schools, which were strongly supported by their large congregations.

On July 28, 1922, the joint committee's recommendations were submitted to Superintendent MacCaughey. His approval made headlines the next day (FLSF/HAS). The *Star Bulletin* praised the new direction of Japanese language schools, claiming that it would be "a long step toward the right direction," and predicted that the next step would be "their absorption by the public school system." Even Honolulu Consul General Keiichi Yamasaki publicly supported the recommendation and advised the schools to "adopt the recommendation" (*Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 31 July, 9 August 1922). This shows that avoiding conflict was the consul's primary directive, regardless of the desire of the Japanese community. However, the *Nippū Jiji* complained that although the American committee members labeled this as the product of cooperation, in reality they had "dictated [their orders] to the Japanese members who had to obey" (*Nippū Jiji* [English pages], 1 August 1922). The Japanese Association opposed the joint committee's recommendation and sent an appeal to MacCaughey on August 16. Japanese parents of 6,000 Nikkei children attending 13 Japanese language schools also organized a conference on August 17, 1922. They argued for the absolute necessity for language schools to provide supervision for children after public school, and sent a petition urging MacCaughey not to abolish the early grades (FLSF/HSA). However, on August 26, the Territory's Commissioners of Public Instruction approved the joint committee's recommendations and made them effective as of September 11, 1922. The proposals were then only awaiting the new governor's signature. The Japanese Association sent another petition through its attorney to Governor Wallace R. Farrington. Copies were also sent to the House and Senate legislators, educators, and Hawaii's Chamber of Commerce (JMFA/LC). Governor Farrington had already been planning to abolish Japanese language schools since July 1922, when he had asked MacCaughey to draft a policy that would eliminate language schools in the Territory. In response, MacCaughey enthusiastically quoted the Federal Education Survey which recommended that the DPI "organize a division of foreign language teaching" (FLSF/HSA). Nonetheless, Governor Farrington now hesitated to authorize the DPI proposals because the Japanese Association's attorney, Joseph Lightfoot,

had pointed out both its unconstitutionality and its incompatibility with Act 30 (JMFA/LC). However, the governor signed it on November 18, 1922, after joint committee member K. C. Leebrick (Professor of History and Political Science at the University of Hawaii) revised the regulation draft and the Commissioners of Education approved it again. This revised regulation was to go into effect on January 1, 1923 (FLSF/HAS).

After approving the regulations, Governor Farrington immediately took another step toward eradicating Japanese language schools. That December, he asked MacCaughey to investigate possibilities for offering Asian languages at public schools. The governor explained that Asian languages, like European languages, would be useful for business and should be offered on the same basis as European languages in public schools. MacCaughey consulted with several high school principals, district superintendents, and members of public school teachers associations. On January 3, 1923, he announced a proposal for Asian language instruction to be incorporated into the public education system. He proposed an initial pilot project involving allocating \$3,600 to hire one Chinese and one Japanese language teacher, starting in September 1923. MacCaughey also suggested that other high schools could join if there was sufficient student interest (JMFA/LC). The governor and his associates were making steady steps toward achieving their final goal.

A Test Suit

The DPI's new regulations caused heated public and private disputes among parents and teachers at every Japanese language school and divided the Nikkei community into two passionate camps: those supporting and those opposing a lawsuit against the new act. On December 27, 1922, the Palama Japanese Language School became the first school to challenge the constitutionality of Act 30 and the curtailment regulations. It applied for an injunction in the Territory's Circuit Court. Their petition for an injunction was granted that day by Judge James J. Banks. It was a test class action suit against General Attorney John Albert Matthewman and Superintendent MacCaughey. The plaintiff's brief explained that Act 30 affected the rights of more than 5,000 owners of 146 language schools, with \$250,000 of property and 20,000 pupils at Japanese language schools in Hawaii. The brief also stated that the measures violated the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments of U.S. Constitution as well as the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the United States and

Japan. The brief argued that of the 726 students at Palama Language School, 312 pupils (58 kindergarteners and 254 first and second graders) would be expelled immediately based on the curtailment regulation (JMFA/LC). Seven other Japanese schools decided to join the test suit before Judge Banks' February 3, 1923 ruling. Banks upheld the constitutionality of Act 30 but invalidated the new regulations. Both the government and the Japanese language schools filed interlocutory appeals to the Territorial Supreme Court; the former was against the court ruling on the DPI regulations, and the latter was against the ruling on Act 30 (*Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 3 February 1923).

Meanwhile, an amendment to Act 30 passed the legislature and was signed by Governor Farrington on May 2, 1923. The school control law, now called Act 171, further empowered DPI to strengthen its control over ethnic schools. It included Act 30's clauses and codified the textbook committee's proposed curtailment into law. Act 171 also required a one dollar per pupil charge as an annual fee for language schools to receive a license and to pay the salary of a DPI supervisor for foreign language schools (JMFA/LC). Its passage encouraged many Japanese language schools to join the litigation against the Territorial government.

A month before Act 171 passed, the Japanese Embassy in Washington tried to back up Nikkei efforts to block the bill to amend Act 30. The counselor of the Japanese Embassy dropped off a memorandum, "not a (letter of) protest," he said, regarding the Hawaii and California school control bills at the office of Secretary of State Charles E. Hughes on April 11, 1923. The memorandum read, "It would be desirable to postpone further restrictions . . . until actual experience in California and Hawaii shall have shown the regulation now in force to be defective" (RG59/NA). Ambassador Masanao Hanihara's memorandum was referring to California's foreign language school bill to amend the present school law, which was similar to Hawaii's Act 30. The memorandum requested federal intervention with the California and Hawaii legislatures to kill the school control bills. Although it was only a diplomatic request that merely suggested a "desirable" solution, considering the previous attitude of Japanese consul generals, which was altogether to avoid the language school issues, this was a significant change. Right before Hanihara was appointed as Ambassador to the United States, he as Vice Foreign Minister wrote Vice Education Minister Takaichirō Akaji. Hanihara explained that the 1916 Sawayanagi policy regarding Nikkei children's education could bring about "a serious diplomatic incident" and "provide

Japanese exclusionists with ideal ammunition” if strictly followed, and suggested that the government should give each region more flexibility. Akaji approved Hanihara’s suggestion on August 24, 1922 (DRO 3.10.2.54). This again demonstrated that the priority of the Japanese government in terms of the international relationship was to relieve tension related to Japanese immigration, rather than advocating for the interests of their overseas nationals. Hughes dismissed Hanihara’s brief, explaining to the American Chargé d’Affaires in Tokyo that no “useful purpose would be served by informing either the State of California or the Territory of Hawaii,” as “education in the United State is so exclusively a matter of local concern” (RG59/NA).

In the midst of this tension, the first Japanese language program at a public school was established at McKinley High School in Honolulu on October 1, 1924. The first instructor of Japanese language at the public school was University of Hawaii Japanese Professor Tasuku Harada, who had a close relationship with Reverend Okumura. Harada was a former president of Dōshisha University (Congregationalist), Okumura’s alma mater. Both Harada and Okumura were on the Japanese committee of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association and members of the Textbook Revision Joint Committee. This Japanese language program was arranged by the Committee for Oriental Language Studies, chaired by University of Hawaii President Arthur L. Dean, who also was an American member of the Joint Committee for Textbook Revision (DRO 3.8.2.339-2).

The minutes of the Japanese committee of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association, dated September 10, a month before the Japanese program at McKinley High School began, reveals who was involved with this movement. During the meeting, Treasurer Theodore Richards expressed his concern about female high-school students who attended the Hongwanji School for advanced Japanese language study, saying that they “were getting led away from Christianity.” Richards was discussing the Hongwanji Girls’ High School (Hawai Kōtō Jogakkō) established in 1910, the girls’ counterpart of Hongwanji’s junior high school, Hawai Chūgakkō, established three years earlier (JCS). Okumura and Imamura had a long history of confrontation over creating their own high schools. Imamura invited Ryūsaku Tsunoda, who later established Japanese Studies at Columbia University, to be principal of the first Japanese junior high school, the Hawai Chūgakkō. Okumura tried to compete by offering a junior-high-school-level class at his “secular” Honolulu Nihonjin Shō-

gakkō, although this advanced class was short-lived because of low enrollment (DRO 3.10.2.10-3). Then, in 1910 the Hongwanji Girls' High School opened, and Okumura again countered by expanding his Japanese school with both its junior high school and girls' school, renaming it the Hawaii Chūō Gakuin or Central Institute (Okita 1997:143).

So it was no surprise that in 1924, after discussion, the Evangelical Association appointed Harada and Okumura to "investigate the matter of organizing a Japanese high school" (JCS). At their next meeting, on October 8, 1924, Reverend William D. Westervelt reported that Japanese instruction at McKinley High School was arranged by working with Superintendent Willard E. Givens (MacCaughey's successor), University of Hawaii President Dean, DPI supervisor of foreign language schools Henry B. Schwartz (his position was created by Act 171), and McKinley High School Principal Miles E. Cary. Westervelt also reported that the University of Hawaii agreed to recognize the credits students earned from the Japanese program at the high school as entrance credits for the university. Okumura stated that "this plan was satisfactory for the present taking care of the Japanese High School teaching" (JCS).

Conclusion

We have examined the early development of Japanese language instruction in Hawaii's Japanese American community. Japanese language instruction began with the necessity of temporary institutions for Nikkei pupils who planned to return to Japan and as daycare facilities for preschoolers while their parents worked. Christian and Buddhist missionaries began to offer language teaching and established schools partially to propagate their religions and to financially support their religious activities. The religious rivalry engulfed Nikkei communities throughout the islands. Whites in Hawaii argued that Japanese language schools, especially those run by Buddhists, were raising American children of Japanese ancestry as subjects of Imperial Japanese control. This belief was derived from Americans' xenophobia based on their World War I Americanization experience, but also was instigated by Christians. Working with MacCaughey in the DPI, Governor Farrington strove to abolish the language schools and at the same time established an Asian language program in public schools. From the deep involvement of the Territorial government, the U.S. Bureau of Education, the American Military Intelligence Division, DPI, and especially the sugar planters in the Japanese

language school “problem,” we can see that Hawaii authorities perceived Nikkei children’s education as a force which would directly shape Hawaii’s political and economic future. They endeavored to shape the education of second-generation immigrants since they knew that education was the most promising tool to mold “mass” laborers by a handful of ruling class elites. It would allow them to influence the habitus of the Nisei, establishing a foundation of physical and mental structure for them to remain in the lower class of the white-dominated society. Actually, Superintendent of Public Schools Henry W. Kinney, MacCaughey’s predecessor, described Hawaii’s education situation as one of getting public school students “to turn towards agricultural and mechanical directions” rather than “clerical and similar occupations” and asked Claxton to send “practical school men” for the federal educational survey in Hawaii (HSF). Incorporating Japanese language education into the public school system would also allow the oligarchs to control the largest future voting group in the Territory. This echoes historian Eileen Tamura’s thesis that the real Japanese language school question was “who would *control* this teaching, the territorial government or ‘alien’ groups like Buddhist organizations and immigrant associations” (Tamura 1994:157–158). Establishing Japanese in public schools might also have been an attempt to defend against a constitutional challenge to Hawaii’s language school law. The 1923 U.S. Supreme Court case *Meyer v Nebraska* overruled a state law forbidding instruction in German. However, advocates for California’s and Hawaii’s foreign language school laws ignored this precedent on the grounds that their laws were not to “ban” but “regulate” foreign language instruction. Governor Farrington may have thought that offering Japanese instruction at Territorial public schools would be good evidence for this defense.

Hawaii’s Japanese language school situation had a major influence on Japanese language schools on the West Coast during the 1920s. Their textbooks, curricula, and policies were modeled after Hawaii’s. The State of California even adopted Hawaii’s foreign language school laws, while some in the Washington legislature attempted to pass a similar law. The language school lawsuit by Japanese language schools against the Territorial government eventually went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, a case known as *Farrington, Governor of Hawaii, et al. v Tokushige et al.* The 1927 Japanese Language School Supreme Court decision, ruling the Hawaii foreign language school laws unconstitutional, halted California’s school law from being enacted (Asato 2006).

We have examined the development of Japanese language instruction in Hawaii. Japanese lessons at Hawaii's public schools in 1924 probably marked the first time Japanese was offered in an American public school. This means that the Japanese language, like European languages, earned its status as an academic subject and was offered to students of Japanese (or other) ancestry at public schools. However, unlike European languages, which were considered useful to study for academic and business purposes, the Territorial government's motive for teaching the Japanese language at public schools was also to keep Japanese Americans under control.

Although Japanese instruction began at public schools in 1924, it did not seem to prosper. Besides McKinley High School, only one other public school seems to have offered Japanese. Reverend Kikujiro C. Kondo of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association began teaching Japanese at Maui High School in 1925 while taking care of the Paia church on Maui. Reverend Kondo later moved to Honolulu to take over the McKinley High School Japanese program from Mr. Kunitomo, Harada's successor, in 1926 (JCS).

While Japanese instruction at public schools did not flourish in the pre-war era, private Japanese language schools and their enrollment steadily increased. By 1933, 43,600 students enrolled at 190 schools, and in 1940, at the peak of the schools, over 40,000 Nikkei children still attended 200 schools, before World War II shut down all Japanese language schools in 1941 (Okahata 1971:225). The heritage, however, still continues. At present, 668 students attend 10 private Japanese language schools, and 7,300 students study Japanese at 38 secondary public schools (Japan Foundation 2003; Department of Education in Hawaii). They are mainly children of Nikkei, but also include children of other ethnic backgrounds.

There clearly is a need for more research on what was taught in the Japanese language schools as well as other reasons behind the institutionalization of the schools by the various actors—from the governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the University of Hawaii President to other actors behind the scenes, such as the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association and the Hawaiian Evangelical Association. The situation of Japanese language instruction at public schools also needs more research: Did any other public schools offer Japanese, and why was the movement unsuccessful? I believe this paper shows some of the complex interactions that dictated what was probably the first offering of Japanese in an American public school. I hope this highlights some of the social

and political aspects that are part of the context behind Japanese language education in its earliest public phase.

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